Hunger-strike in jails.

* 345 Q.—Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR: Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state the jails and the number of times in each jail the political prisoners went on hunger-strike, the respective periods of duration of each strike, and the number of prisoners involved each time?

A—The hon. Member is referred to the answer to question No. 192. The Government have no information for the period subsequent to October 1930.

Canals

Length, etc., of the Buckingham Canal.

* 346 Q.—Mr. T. SUNDARA RAO NAYUDU: Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) what was the original length of the Buckingham Canal and what is its present length;

(*b*) what were the breadth and depth of the Buckingham Canal when it was first dug and what are its present depth and breadth;

(*c*) what parts of the canal are now silted up and by how much and why;

(*d*) what was the minimum depth of water when the Buckingham Canal was originally dug up and what it is now; and

(*e*) what was the average number of boats per year plying in the Buckingham Canal between 1900 and 1915 and what it is now?

A.—(*a*) The original canal cut in 1806 ran 11 miles north of Madras and was known as 'Cochrane's canal.' In 1878 it was named 'Buckingham Canal.' Its length was then 196 miles. Its present length is 262 miles.

(*b*) In 1882 the canal bed was 30 feet wide north of Madras and 20 feet wide south of Madras and its depth about $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet below M.S.L. The Government have not information regarding the present average depth and breadth but have called for it.

(*c*) & (*d*) The Government have called for a report.

(*e*) The figures for the years 1900—1915 and for 1928–29 are given below:—

	Cargo boats.	Passenger boats.	
1900–01	14,719	5,238	Number of trips of boats.
1901–02	19,985	4,230	
1902–03	21,080	4,641	
1903–04	15,938	6,518	
1904–05	20,186	6,369	
1905–06	24,504	5,471	
1906–07	20,700	6,814	
1907–08	22,535	6,984	
1908–09	20,979	6,970	
1909–10	17,403	8,806	
1910–11	13,989	655	
1911–12	13,000	1,049	
1912–13	864	682	Number of boats.
1913–14	907	706	
1914–15	891	693	
1928–29	2,351 (cargo and passenger).		

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Diwan Bahadur R. N. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar :—" With reference to the answer to clause (*e*), seeing that obviously there is a considerable falling off in the number of boats plying in the canal which only shows that the canal is not fit for proper use, may I know what the Government propose to do to make the canal more efficient ? "

The hon. Mr. A. Y. G Campbell :—" I do not think there is any special proposal before the Government at the present moment."

Diwan Bahadur R. N. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar :—" Do the Government propose to take measures to make the canal as fit as it was in the year 1900 or so ? "

The hon. Mr. A. Y. G. Campbell :—" As far as I am aware, the canal is being maintained now as efficiently as in those years."

Diwan Bahadur R. N. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar :—" Then, may I know why the traffic has been falling ? "

The hon. Mr. A. Y. G. Campbell :—" Probably it is due to the competition with railway and other means of communication."

Diwan Bahadur R. N. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar :—" But the railway was there even in the year 1900 ? "

Floods

Relief to the depressed classes affected by floods in the Madras City and Chingleput.

11-15 a.m. * 347 *Q.*—Mr. H. M. Jagannatham : Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) the extent of damage that was caused to the people of the City of Madras and Chingleput especially to the members of the depressed classes by the recent cyclone and floods ;

(*b*) what assistance the Government have rendered in this connexion to the sufferers in the City similar to that given in Coimbatore and other districts ; and

(*c*) whether the Government propose to give special relief to the sufferers of the depressed classes through the Labour Department or other suitable agency ?

A.—(*a*) A detailed report has been called for about the extent of the damage caused by the floods in the City of Madras. A copy of the report from the Collector of Chingleput showing the extent of the damage done by the floods in the Chingleput district is annexed.[a]

(*b*) & (*c*) The answer to (*c*) is ' Yes ' ; the attention of the hon. Member is invited to the answer to clause (*b*) of question No. 142.

Mr. Abdul Hameed Khan :—" May I know whether the Government have called for a report only in regard to a particular community, or have they called for a general report ? "

[a] Printed as Appendix I on pages 769—771 infra.